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Entrepreneurship for sustainable development

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 67/202 of 21 December 2012 and 69/210 of 19 December 2014,

Reaffirming its resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", in which it adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets, its commitment to working tirelessly for the full implementation of the Agenda by 2030, its recognition that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, its commitment to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions —

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economic, social and environmental — in a balanced and integrated manner, and to building upon the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and seeking to address their unfinished business,

Reaffirming also its resolution 70/299 of 29 July 2016 on the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level,

Reaffirming further its resolution 69/313 of 27 July 2015 on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, supports and complements it, helps to contextualize its means of implementation targets with concrete policies and actions, and reaffirms the strong political commitment to address the challenge of financing and creating an enabling environment at all levels for sustainable development in the spirit of global partnership and solidarity,

Recalling the Sendai Declaration and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030,[1] and reaffirming that the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, among other things, seeks to develop and implement holistic disaster risk management at all levels in line with the Sendai Framework,

Welcoming the Paris Agreement[2] and its early entry into force, and encouraging all the parties thereto to fully implement the Agreement, and the parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[3] that have not yet done so to deposit their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, as appropriate, as soon as possible,

Recalling relevant strategies and programmes of action, including the Istanbul Declaration and Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020,[4] the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway,[5] the Vienna Declaration and Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024,[6] taking note of Agenda 2063 of the African Union, and recognizing the importance of addressing the diverse needs and challenges faced by countries in special situations, in particular African countries, the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, as well as the specific challenges facing middle-income countries,

Recalling also the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,[7] the political declaration adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-ninth session,[8] which reviewed the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and

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[1] Resolution 69/283, annexes I and II.

[2] See FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21, annex.

[3] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

[4] *Report of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Istanbul, Turkey, 9-13 May 2011* (A/CONF.219/7), chaps. I and II.

[5] Resolution 69/15, annex.

[6] Resolution 69/137, annexes I and II.

[7] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[8] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2015, Supplement No. 7* (E/2015/27), chap. I, sect. C, resolution 59/1, annex.

Platform for Action, and the agreed conclusions adopted at its sixtieth session, entitled "Women's empowerment and the link to sustainable development", and stressing that women and girls, particularly in developing countries, are important drivers of entrepreneurship and sustainable development,

Welcoming the contribution of all relevant stakeholders, including the private sector, non-governmental organizations and civil society, to the implementation of the outcomes of the United Nations conferences and summits and their reviews in the economic, social, environmental and related fields, as well as the realization of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals,

Recognizing that multi-stakeholder partnership and the resources, knowledge and ingenuity of the private sector, civil society, the scientific community, academia, philanthropy and foundations, parliaments, local authorities, volunteers and other stakeholders will be important in order to mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, complement the efforts of government and support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in all countries, including developing countries, and in this regard taking note of the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth,

Emphasizing the pivotal role of entrepreneurship in achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions, and emphasizing that achieving the Sustainable Development Goals requires the talents, creativity and entrepreneurial vigour of the entire population,

Recognizing that entrepreneurship drives economic growth by creating jobs, promoting decent work and sustainable agriculture and fostering innovation,

Recognizing also the positive contribution entrepreneurship can make in promoting social cohesion, reducing inequalities and expanding opportunities for all, including women, youth, persons with disabilities and the most vulnerable people,

Recognizing further that entrepreneurship can help address environmental challenges through the introduction of new climate change mitigation and adaptation technologies and resilience measures, as well as by promoting environmentally sustainable practices and consumption patterns,

Deeply concerned by continued high rates of youth unemployment, particularly in developing countries, which stifle the transformative potential of young people in sustainable development,

Reaffirming its commitment to substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship,

Acknowledging the importance of promoting development-oriented policies that support productive activities, job creation and entrepreneurship, including social entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services,

Recognizing the role of micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises in promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization that could contribute to job creation,

Noting with concern that societal attitudes and negative preconceptions, including fear of failure, lack of opportunity and insufficient support structures, can undermine efforts to create a culture of entrepreneurship,

Recognizing the importance of quality, accessible, timely and reliable disaggregated data for monitoring progress in the implementation of entrepreneurship policies and their direct and indirect contribution to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals,

1. *Welcomes* the report of the Secretary-General on entrepreneurship for development;[9]

2. *Reiterates* the need to promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all, and in that regard emphasizes the importance of improved regulatory environments and policy initiatives that promote entrepreneurship, including social entrepreneurship, and foster micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, and stresses the positive role that entrepreneurship plays in driving job creation and expanding opportunities for all, including for women and youth;

3. *Encourages* Governments to take a coordinated and inclusive approach to promoting entrepreneurship involving all stakeholders, while noting initiatives of civil society, academia and the private sector as important entrepreneurship drivers, and to develop policies, taking into account national priorities and circumstances, that address the legal, social and regulatory barriers to equal, effective economic participation, and stresses the need for a comprehensive and holistic approach to entrepreneurship that includes long-term and cross-sectoral strategies;

4. *Acknowledges* that promoting entrepreneurship can stimulate new production processes and technology development, including the building of endogenous capacities enabling climate change mitigation and adaptation and enhancing energy efficiency, and recognizes that such a policy, which could draw on the initiatives presented in the Global Climate Action Agenda, can help Governments to meet their targets for the Paris Agreement on climate change;[2]

5. *Also acknowledges* the important role that trade plays in creating the environment for encouraging competition, innovation and opportunity for entrepreneurs, and reaffirms in this regard the critical role that a rules-based, open, transparent, predictable, inclusive, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system under the World Trade Organization, as well as meaningful trade liberalization, and multi-stakeholder initiatives such as eTrade for All, can play in stimulating economic growth and development worldwide, thereby benefiting all countries at all stages of development as they advance towards sustainable development;

6. *Emphasizes* that partnerships with the private sector play an important role in promoting entrepreneurship, generating employment and investment, increasing revenue potential, developing new technologies and innovative business models and enabling high, sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth while protecting workers' rights;

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[9] A/71/210.

7. *Recognizes* the remarkable role of entrepreneurship in the development of regional economic integration, which can be an important catalyst for implementing economic reforms, reducing trade barriers and decreasing trade costs;

8. *Invites* Member States to strengthen the capacity of national financial institutions to reach out to those who have no access to banking, insurance and other financial services, especially in rural areas, and encourages them to adopt regulatory and supervisory frameworks that facilitate the safe and sound provision of services to such populations, increase access to information and promote financial literacy, particularly for women and youth and the most vulnerable people;

9. *Encourages* Member States to expand alternative sources of financing, including blended finance as well as impact investing, cooperatives and venture philanthropy, and diversify the retail financial service system to include non-traditional providers of financial services, such as microcredit and microfinance, stresses the value of a sound regulatory framework in this regard, and also encourages the provision of incentives to microfinance institutions that meet national standards for delivering sound financial services to the poor, with a particular emphasis on women;

10. *Emphasizes* the important role of national efforts aimed at bringing workers from the informal to the formal economy and integrating them into national social security systems, as appropriate, including by simplifying administrative processes, for example, enabling business registration through single-window and e-registration procedures, and notes that recommendation No. 204 of the International Labour Organization can provide useful guidance on the transition from the informal to the formal economy;

11. *Recognizes* that technological improvement, particularly through the diffusion of technology, can provide new opportunities for businesses to improve their competitiveness and increase their productive capacities, and in this regard encourages Member States to increase cooperation in support of technology exchange and transfer, innovation, capacity-building programmes and the sharing of best practices for promoting entrepreneurship;

12. *Also recognizes* that entrepreneurs can address sustainable development challenges by developing effective and simple solutions in the areas of utility services, education, health care, hunger eradication and the environment, and that social entrepreneurship, including cooperatives and social enterprises, can help to alleviate poverty and catalyse social transformation by strengthening the productive capacities of vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities, and producing goods and services accessible to them;

13. *Acknowledges* the value of entrepreneurship education and the dissemination of entrepreneurial thinking across all sectors, and encourages all relevant actors to increase efforts to systemically integrate entrepreneurship within the formal and informal education system, including through, inter alia, skills development, capacity-building, professional training programmes and business incubators, as well as online platforms and e-mentorships, while fostering innovation and using innovative teaching methods in line with the demands of the competitive markets and ensuring the full participation of women and girls.

14. *Encourages* all stakeholders, in particular women and young entrepreneurs, to apply their creativity and innovation to solving sustainable development challenges, and emphasizes that local innovation and entrepreneurship systems need to be able to fully participate in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,[10] including the Sustainable Development Goals, and that concerted efforts are needed to ensure the participation of all;

15. *Highlights* the importance of developing and implementing policies and programmes to support women's entrepreneurship, in particular opportunities for new women entrepreneurs and those that lead to business expansion for existing women-owned microenterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises, and encourages Governments to increase investments in female-owned companies and businesses and to create a climate that is conducive to increasing the number of women entrepreneurs and the size of their businesses by providing them with training and advisory services in business, administration and information and communications technology, facilitating networking and information-sharing and increasing their participation on advisory boards and in other forums so as to enable them to contribute to the formulation and review of policies and programmes being developed, in particular by financial institutions;

16. *Recognizes* that social entrepreneurship can create alternative sustainable models of production, finance and consumption to respond to social, economic and environmental issues, also recognizes the need to implement policies and programmes aimed at supporting social entrepreneurship, and encourages Governments to set up an environment conducive to social innovation;

17. *Also recognizes* that harnessing entrepreneurial talents among young people is vital for increasing productive capacities, developing new forms of entrepreneurship focused on information and communications technology, big data, digitalization, smart cities and creating start-ups, generating full and productive employment and inclusive economic growth, and encourages Member States to integrate youth entrepreneurship strategies and innovative programmes into their national policies, create a nurturing environment for the full realization of the rights and capabilities of young people, and increase investment in micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, including through impact investment favouring the poorest and most vulnerable, entrepreneurial education, youth capacity-building and information and communications technology;

18. *Encourages* Governments and all sectors of society to take sustainable measures to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for persons with disabilities, on an equal basis and without discrimination on the basis of disability, including by promoting access to inclusive education systems, skills development and vocational and entrepreneurial training, in order to enable persons with disabilities to attain and maintain maximum independence, and notes that further efforts are needed to increase awareness of the ability of persons with disabilities to innovate and contribute to the achievement of sustainable development through entrepreneurship;

19. *Stresses* the need to highlight the value of entrepreneurship and its contribution to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including, inter alia,

[10] Resolution 70/1.

the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions, by promoting policies, initiatives and programmes that support the development of an enabling entrepreneurial ecosystem, including by raising public awareness, reinforcing local support networks and employing specific measures aimed at removing negative preconceptions;

20. *Also stresses* the importance of indicators that can be used to formulate targeted entrepreneurship policies and measure their impact on the Sustainable Development Goals, and in this regard encourages Member States, in cooperation with all relevant stakeholders, to further identify and develop indicators at the national and regional levels as appropriate, and to continue contributing to the work of the Statistical Commission on the global indicator framework;

21. *Recognizes* that democratic political institutions, transparent and accountable public and private entities, effective anti-corruption measures and responsible corporate governance are key conditions for making market economies and enterprises more responsive to the values and long-term goals of society;

22. *Acknowledges* that the private sector can contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and poverty eradication, and stresses the need for Member States to develop policies and, where appropriate, strengthen national and international policy regulatory frameworks and their coherence, harnessing the potential of science, technology and innovation, closing technology gaps and scaling up capacity-building at all levels to better align private sector incentives with public goals, including incentivizing the private sector to adopt sustainable practices, and foster long-term quality investment, taking into account the importance of responsible business practices and corporate social responsibility, as reflected in the 10 principles of the United Nations Global Compact, environmental, social and governance performance standards and greater transparency in supply chains to avoid forced and child labour abuse;

23. *Calls upon* the relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to further recognize and integrate entrepreneurship in its various forms into their policies, programmes and reports, as appropriate, and invites the United Nations system, and in particular the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, to continue to provide support to and assist Member States, at their request, to identify, formulate, implement and assess coherent policy measures on entrepreneurship and the promotion of micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises;

24. *Encourages* countries to consider establishing or strengthening national centres of excellence in entrepreneurship and similar bodies, and also encourages cooperation and networking and the sharing of best practices;

25. *Decides* to give consideration, as appropriate, to the contribution of entrepreneurship to sustainable development in the follow-up and review framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

26. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session a report on the implementation of the present resolution, and decides to include the item entitled "Sustainable development" in the provisional agenda of its seventy-third session, unless otherwise agreed in the discussions on the revitalization of the Second Committee.